

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

09/728,263

Examiner

Elizabeth Quan

Applicant(s)

BERGH ET AL.

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to amendment filed 10/28/2003 and telecommunication held 1/20/2004.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 168-177 and 179-183.
3. ☐ The drawings filed on _____ are accepted by the Examiner.
4. ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
 1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
 - * Certified copies not received: _____.
5. ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application) since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.
 - (a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
6. ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121 since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application. **THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE**

7. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
8. ☒ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No. _____.
 - (b) ☐ including changes required by the proposed drawing correction filed _____, which has been approved by the Examiner.
 - (c) ☒ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No. 6.

Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the margin according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).

9. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 5 <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 6 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413), Paper No. <u>01202004</u> |
| 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08), Paper No. _____ | 7 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Amendment/Comment |
| 4 <input type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit of Biological Material | 8 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance |
| | 9 <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

1. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Paul A. Stone on 1/20/2004.

The application has been amended as follows:

- a. In claim 182, line 17, after "for a supply binary junction, or as a terminal supply port, and", insert --2ⁿ microcomponents adapted for receiving fluids from the respective 2ⁿ terminal supply ports and discharging fluid to respective 2ⁿ terminal effluent ports of a microfluidic effluent-distribution manifold, --.
- b. In claim 182, line 19, after "effluent fluid from each of 2ⁿ micromponents to", delete "an" and insert --a single common--.
- c. In claim 182, line 38, after "planar density of not less than about 1 microcomponent / cm²", delete ", and 2ⁿ microcomponents adapted for receiving fluids from or discharging fluids to the respective 2ⁿ terminal ports" and insert ---.

2. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: The prior art of record does not teach or fairly suggest the combination of a microfluidic fluid-supply manifold, which satisfies the claimed mathematical constructs, and microcomponents, which receives fluid from the terminal ports of the microfluidic fluid-supply manifold. U.S. Patent No. 4,537,217 to Allen, Jr. discloses a fluid distributor that satisfies the claimed mathematical constructs.

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However, there is no motivation to add microcomponents to the fluid distributor of Allen, Jr. WO 96/15576 to Zanzucchi et al. discloses both a microfluidic manifold distributing fluids into the microcomponents. However, there is motivation to modify the microfluidic manifold, such that the distribution channel has a flow conductance that is substantially the same for each of the flow paths between the common port and each of the terminal ports. U.S. Patent No. 6,143,152 to Simpson et al. discloses a capillary array electrophoresis (CAE) micro-plate with channel configurations that appears resemble the manifold of the drawings in the immediate specification. However, it is unclear if the distribution channel has a flow conductance that is substantially the same for each of the flow paths between the common port and each of the terminal ports.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Elizabeth Quan whose telephone number is (571) 272-1261. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F (8:00-4:30).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Jill Warden can be reached on (571) 272-1267. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (703) 872-9306.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0661.


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Elizabeth Quan
Examiner
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Jill Warden
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